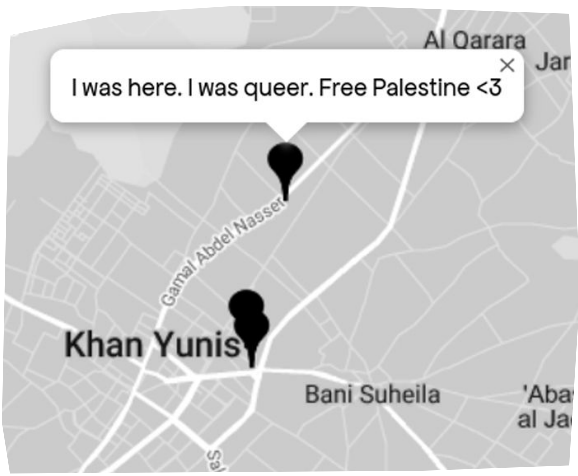
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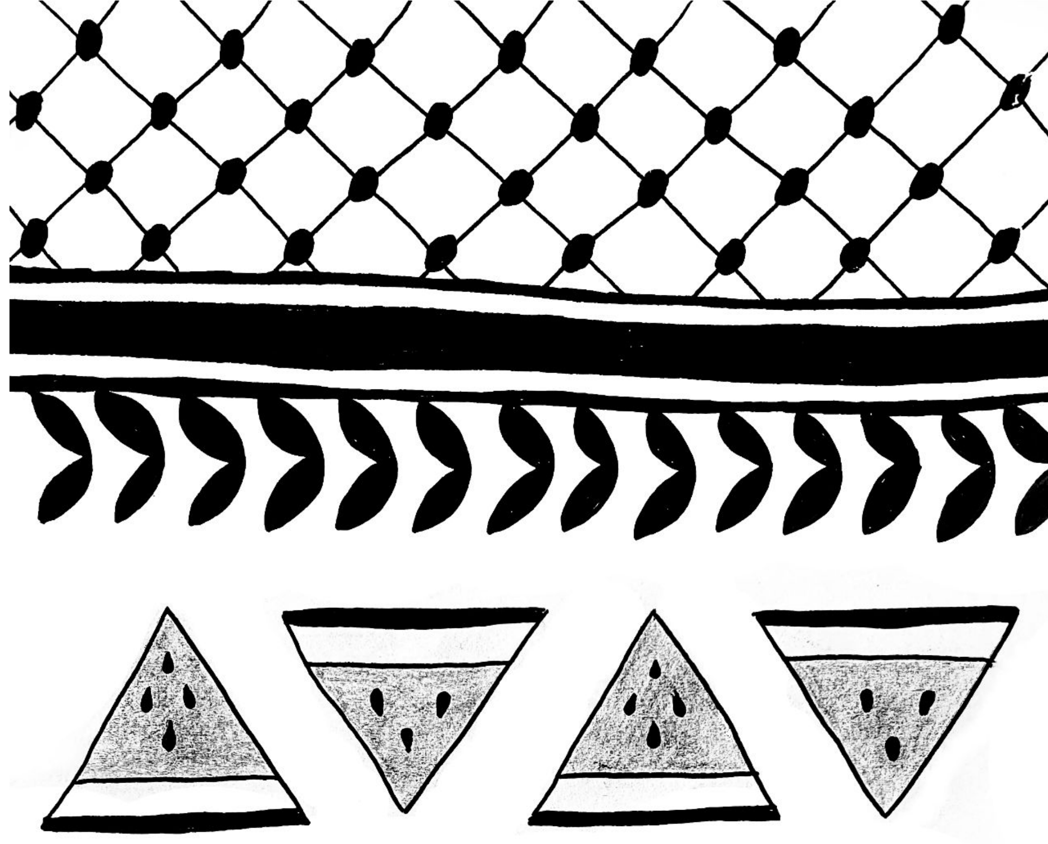


reprinted without permission:
i hope it's clear why sharing these words was urgent and necessary.

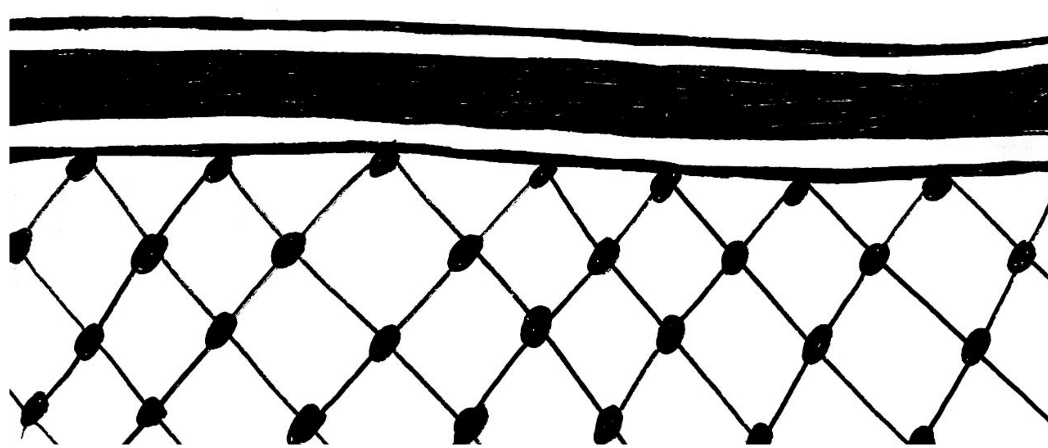
pdf at pleasurepie.org/printables

1st edition by breakingpatterns.noblogs.org
november 2023

cover design and edits by pleasure pie
january 2024



QUEER VOICES FROM THE FIGHT FOR PALESTINIAN LIBERATION



What do any of you know of my Palestine? Of the late night queer parties in Ramallah? Of raves held in biblically aged buildings? Of lesbians in hijabs, of gay men in hoop earrings, of trans Palestinians dancing with joyful abandon?

We fear Israel first, before our families, always. We're 100 times more likely to die at the hands of an Israeli gun or bomb than by western propagandized ideas of honor killings.

I've seen White Christian Americans wish their child be dead rather than gay.

Israel is the one that weaponizes the homophobia that Queer people all over the world of all religions experience **to justify murdering Palestinians** of all kinds, young and old, Christian and Muslim, Queer and Straight.

Zaheer Suboh

FURTHER READING

Palestine as a Queer Struggle
uscpr.org/activist-resource/grassroots-advocacy-toolkit/palestine-as-a-queer- struggle/

Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions: Say No to Pinkwashing
bdsmovement.net/pinkwashing

What is pinkwashing?
shado-mag.com/know/what-is-pinkwashing/

Decolonize Palestine
decolonizepalestine.com

Palestinian Feminist Collective's action toolkit
palestinianfeministcollective.org/all-out-for-palestine/

Solidarity with Palestine - A Radical Black Feminist Mandate:
A Reading List
www.blackwomenradicals.com/blog-feed/black-feminist-perspectives-on- palestine-a-reading-list

A Palestinian trans woman's story peels away Israel's pinkwashing veil
www.972mag.com/trans-lgbtq-palestinian-israel-pinkwashing/

All Out for Palestine: Against Queer Silence and Complicity
www.midnightsunmag.ca/all-out-for-palestine-against-queer-silence-and- complicity/

The queer Israeli youth taking a stand against pinkwashing
www.972mag.com/queer-israeli-youth-pinkwashing-palestinians/

Queers speak out: Why do I support Palestine?
en.velvele.net/2023/11/02/queers-speak-out-why-i-support-palestine/

#NoPrideInApartheid Toolkit
uscpr.org/NoPrideInApartheid

This year, the 73rd commemoration of Nakba landed the same week as Eid, the holiday that closes the holy month of Ramadan. While Ramadan is supposed to be a time to rekindle spiritual connectivity, this year Eid’s festivity was undercut by the solemn intensity of ongoing repression in Sheikh Jarrah, Silwan, the Al Aqsa Mosque and Gaza.

Israel is falsely known as a beacon in a region void of rights. From its supposed feminism to its “LGBTQ friendly” tourism, Israel’s reliance on **militarization, repression, and racism** receives sparse attention.

As a queer Arab, I drown between ads beckoning me to purchase gay sodas while swallowing domestic Zionist repression masked as progress.

This correlation is not a contradiction: **Their “Pride” is built upon the repression and exploitation of others.** And so I find place in the placelessness, the movements we have paved to liberate our lands and ourselves.

originally published in the San Diego Union-Tribune:
www.sandiegouniontribune.com/opinion/commentary/story/2021-06-28/ opinion-trans-palestinian-pride-month-isolation

November 9, 2023

A LIBERATORY DEMAND FROM QUEERS IN PALESTINE

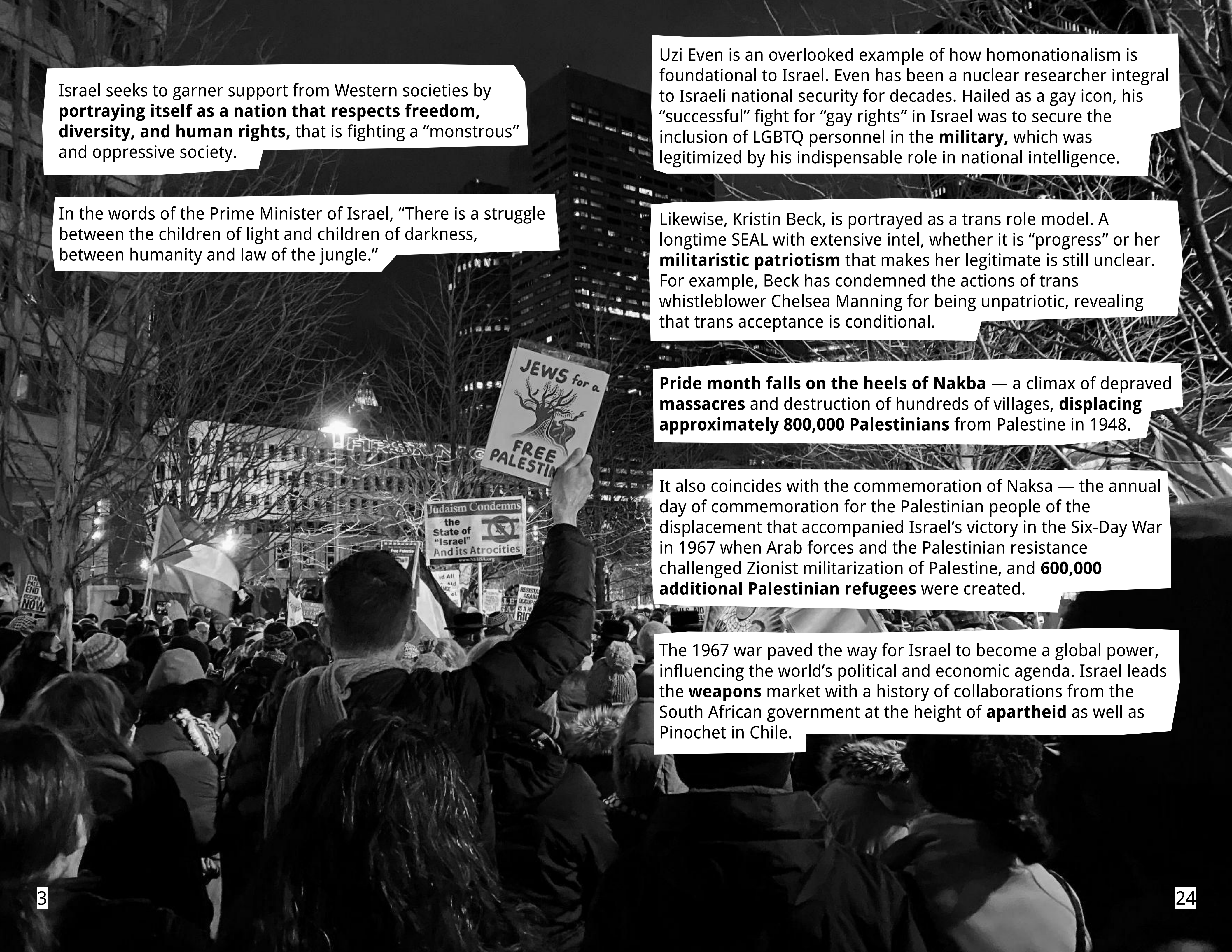
Abridged version

We write this as workers, students, farmers, parents – as Palestinians, as queer Palestinians.

Since October 7th, we have been witnessing an **accelerated genocide** unfolding in the Gaza Strip and in all parts of Palestine.

The brutality committed by the Israeli state produces **increasingly harrowing conditions for those who remain alive in Palestine.**

This brutality is sustained through the economic, military, diplomatic, and political **support of world leaders** (including the U.S.).



Israel seeks to garner support from Western societies by **portraying itself as a nation that respects freedom, diversity, and human rights,** that is fighting a "monstrous" and oppressive society.

In the words of the Prime Minister of Israel, "There is a struggle between the children of light and children of darkness, between humanity and law of the jungle."

Uzi Even is an overlooked example of how homonationalism is foundational to Israel. Even has been a nuclear researcher integral to Israeli national security for decades. Hailed as a gay icon, his "successful" fight for "gay rights" in Israel was to secure the inclusion of LGBTQ personnel in the **military,** which was legitimized by his indispensable role in national intelligence.

Likewise, Kristin Beck, is portrayed as a trans role model. A longtime SEAL with extensive intel, whether it is "progress" or her **militaristic patriotism** that makes her legitimate is still unclear. For example, Beck has condemned the actions of trans whistleblower Chelsea Manning for being unpatriotic, revealing that trans acceptance is conditional.

Pride month falls on the heels of Nakba — a climax of depraved **massacres** and destruction of hundreds of villages, **displacing approximately 800,000 Palestinians** from Palestine in 1948.

It also coincides with the commemoration of Naksa — the annual day of commemoration for the Palestinian people of the displacement that accompanied Israel's victory in the Six-Day War in 1967 when Arab forces and the Palestinian resistance challenged Zionist militarization of Palestine, and **600,000 additional Palestinian refugees** were created.

The 1967 war paved the way for Israel to become a global power, influencing the world's political and economic agenda. Israel leads the **weapons** market with a history of collaborations from the South African government at the height of **apartheid** as well as Pinochet in Chile.

Secondly, it exceptionalizes and **absolves the structures culpable** in the very violence that many of us are responding to.

While the U.S. claims to affirm women and LGBTQ people, it is **selective** which people it affirms. Following the 2016 Pulse shooting, rainbow police cars flooded parades, stoking transgender anxiety around police. A Palestinian woman, Noor Salman, was imprisoned for years despite her repeated testimony that she was a survivor of domestic violence. Pulse also catalyzed Countering Violent Extremism, a counterterrorism program utilizing social services to **surveil and obstruct Muslim political dissidence.**

Thus, while George W. Bush launched the **war on terror,** it was "post-racist" icon Barack Obama who **expanded** it. Though Joe Biden was elected by Muslims to dismantle the program's successor, he pumped it full of funding and supported its third rebranding.

Similarly, in Israel and the U.S., progressive ideologies are imbued with deceptive layers, often called "pinkwashing." **They have used feminist and LGBTQ narratives to invade Gaza and Afghanistan.** I am not "proud" when progress is quantified by Zionist militarization.

[The reality is that] **all forms of violence,** including sexual violence, are part of Zionist domination over Palestinian life.

And yet **Israel weaponizes queerness to justify war and colonial repression**—as if their bombs, apartheid walls, guns, knives, and bulldozers are selective of who they harm based on sexuality and gender.

We refuse [to let] the violence we face as queer people [be used] to **demonize and dehumanize** our communities—especially in service of **imperial and genocidal acts.**

We deserve life because we are human.

We are fighting **interconnected systems of oppression.**

No **queer solidarity** can be fostered if [we don’t disrupt] the racialized, capitalist, fascist, and imperial structures that [oppress] us.

We call on queer and feminist activists and groups around the world to stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people in their resistance to displacement, land theft, and ethnic cleansing and their struggle for the liberation of their lands and futures from Zionist settler-colonialism.

PRIDE MONTH IS ISOLATING FOR ME AS SILENCE ABOUT VIOLENCE IN PALESTINE CONTINUES

Yazan Zahzah June 28, 2021

Pep radiates from the screen. I feel twinges of fatigue and annoyance when first seeing the surge of rainbow advertisements. It is Pride month again.

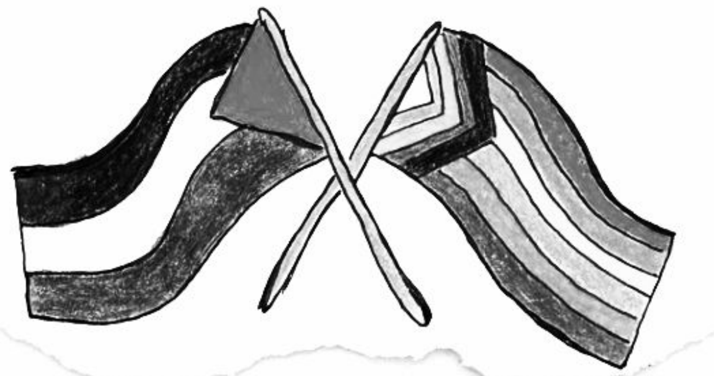
As a trans Palestinian whose family was violently displaced from Palestine and Lebanon due to Zionist militarization, Pride is isolating, especially with the **silence** surrounding ongoing violence in Palestine. It is within the margins I am displaced to that I find home: Palestine is the epitome of placelessness and the beating heart of worldwide struggle. It is the most queer.

Pride is celebrated every June and originated in 1969 with the Stonewall Riots. It commemorates the legacy of people like Sylvia Riveria and Marsha P. Johnson: **Latinx and Black leaders who synthesized radical queer politics,** addressing intersections of race, immigration, gender, class and national struggle. Rampant transphobia, racism, xenophobia and classism guided by White, cisgender, middle-class gay men **whitewashed** this rhetoric of its potential and shaped the movement into what many see today: **shallow** aspirations for structural **assimilation.**

In United States popular culture, feminism and LGBT rhetoric promote figures like Gloria Steinem and Harvey Milk. While they are influential figures, **two flaws exist with this glorification.**

One, it presumes that U.S. “democratic” infrastructures are the only ones that could allow oppressed communities to fight for justice, often **co-opting centuries of Indigenous, Black and Global South ideologies** predating U.S. political frameworks.

ALL SYSTEMS OF OPPRESSION ARE BOUND TO EACHOTHER



THERE CANNOT BE QUEER LIBERATION WITHOUT THE LIBERATION OF ALL PEOPLE

@SAMMYRABBIT



This call cannot be answered only by sharing statements and signing letters, but by an **active engagement with decolonial struggles** in Palestine and around the globe.

Our demands are:

- **Reject Israeli funding,** refuse collaborations with all Israeli institutions, and join the BDS movement.

- **Strike:** Silently or publicly, refuse that your labor be used for the silencing of Palestine.

- Do what queers have done for decades: **reclaim the narrative,** this time about Palestine. What is happening in Palestine is **genocide.** israel is a **settler-colony.** Palestinians are a **militarily occupied and colonized society.**

- **Contact your local representatives** to pressure them to defund the genocide, ending their military, diplomatic, and political support with Israel. Speak up against the criminalization of solidarity with Palestine and the projection of European antisemitism on Palestinians.

- **Shut down main streets.** Organize a sit-in in your local central station. Interrupt the flow of commerce.

Demanding a **ceasefire** is the first step in holding Israel accountable for its crimes against humanity. We must also demand to break the siege on Gaza and the dismantlement of the Zionist settler-colony.

Yet "Israeli savior" myths persist because pinkwashing works to erase the **Palestinian queer movement.**

The Palestinian queer movement merges the fight against colonialism with the fight against patriarchal and capitalist oppression. And it views itself as an integral part of Palestinian society.

We refuse to allow a wedge to be driven between ourselves and our society. We claim a place for ourselves in our communities and in our struggle.

What does all this mean for international activists?

Anti-pinkwashing work should:

- Center queer Palestinian voices
- Understand pinkwashing within its settler-colonial context
- Make connections to other forms of colonialism and gendered/sexual oppression

Full article:
www.alqaws.org/articles/Beyond-Propaganda-Pinkwashing-as-Colonial- Violence

The term “propaganda” does not capture the true scope of pinkwashing. **Recognizing pinkwashing as colonial violence can help us understand how Israel oppresses Palestinians.**

Israel breaks apart and eliminates Palestinian communities through:

1. The military violence of occupation and siege
2. The legal regimes of apartheid
3. The denial of refugees’ right of return
4. **Dividing Palestinians psychologically**
   → This is where pinkwashing comes in!

Pinkwashing pushes the racist idea that sexual diversity is foreign to Palestinian society. **This tells queer Palestinians that they must give up on some part of their experience:** we can either be queer and not accepted as a Palestinian, or we can be Palestinian and not accepted as queer.

Internalized pinkwashing strengthens myths that associate queer Palestinians with Israel [and Western societies] and breed **feelings of hopelessness that narrow our political imaginations.**

Pinkwashing tells queer Palestinians that personal (and never collective) liberation can only be found by escaping from their communities and running into their colonizer’s arms.

The myth of Palestinians finding “queer refuge” in Israeli cities flies in the face of the actual policies of the colonial state, which are premised on the **exclusion and destruction of Palestinians**—queer, trans, or otherwise.

We, queer Palestinians, are an **integral part of our society,** and we are informing you: from the heavily militarized alleys of Jerusalem to Huwara’s scorched lands, to Jaffa’s surveilled streets and cutting across Gaza’s besieging walls, **from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free.**

Visit queersinpalestine.noblogs.org for the full text, plus signatories and translations.

THERE’S NO PRIDE IN OCCUPATION

אין גאווה בכיבוש

GAY TRAVEL
(or Music Makes the People Come Together)

Kyle Carrero Lopez

The gays want to know how B's trip
to the settler colony went.

He says: What can I say?
It was a lot like the settler colony

where I live, but with a great desert flair.
Street life was fabulous over there.

The city's rainbow flags were a school
of fish—plentiful, spry,

slick in their sidewinds,
a shield of gills turned one large gill.

B slid through security checkpoint
after security checkpoint,

each playing a different era of Madonna.
All over town, men held each other's hands

and not-hands and smiled, sun-licked
on high-rises, far from thoughts

of where they were or how or who
was below. Parties every night.

By promoting gay tourism, Israel seeks to win the support of queer communities across the world and **prevent connections with the Palestinian struggle.**

The promotion of "gay-friendly Israel" **relies on** presenting Palestinians (and Arabs more generally) as the opposite: sexually regressive—and therefore undeserving of solidarity. These stereotypes draw on **racism and Islamophobia.**

BEYOND PROPAGANDA: PINKWASHING AS COLONIAL VIOLENCE

Abridged version

alQaws: for Sexual & Gender Diversity in Palestinian Society

October 18, 2020

Over a decade ago, Palestinian activists adopted the term **“pinkwashing” to describe how the Israeli state and its supporters use the language of gay and trans rights to direct international attention away from the oppression of Palestinians.**

Israeli travel guides and promotional videos advertise Tel Aviv beaches as a gay-friendly getaway destination. The open inclusion of gay officers in the Israeli occupation army is used as proof of liberal forward-mindedness.

Pinkwashing emerged as part of an ongoing international propaganda effort, which aims to **rebrand Israel** as a liberal and “modern” state in the face of the **growing Palestine solidarity movement.** By promoting gay tourism, Israel seeks to win the support of queer communities across the world and **prevent connections with the Palestinian struggle.**

At the club, B met a twunk
in a harness who would shout things like

We’re so lucky to be alive—as in: under
the molly under the red lights

under the ceiling
under the missile defense system

and not Over There, where, like smog,
gay hate hugs the air.

But this one queer kept trying to interject.
There’s queers on the fringes too, he’d start,

queers teargassed, queers shot
in self-proclaimed self-defense

while club queers choose which tank,
which cross-body bag to wear.

And each time he’d begin to speak,
the EDM would just keep playing

louder and louder,
almost like the DJ was doing it on purpose.

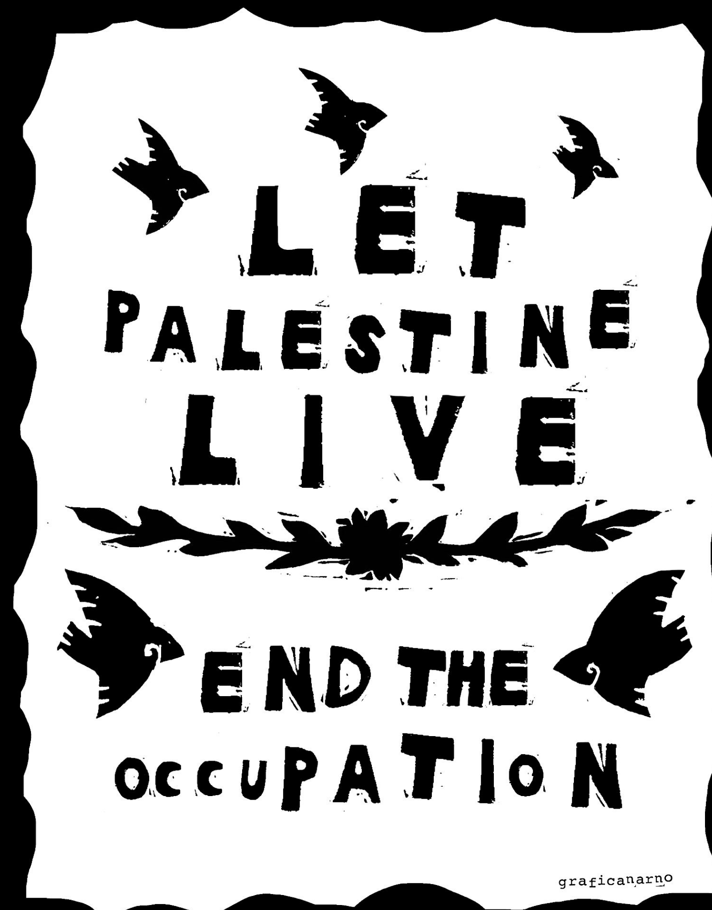
Source:
jewishcurrents.org/gay-travel-or-music-makes-the-people-come- together

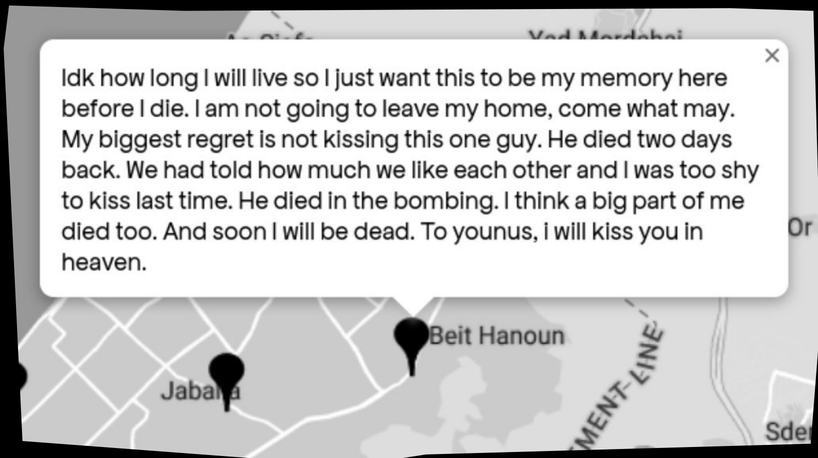
DO NOT TURN AWAY FROM IMAGES OF WAR that your government helped create. each one contains an entire world no less real than your own. EACH ONE SHOULD HURT LIKE HELL. let your body be filled with a hunger for justice, for continued life on earth and DEMAND it of those who claim to represent YOU

Words from a queer American Jew:

When one side of a “conflict” can control the other’s water, food, electricity, and internet supply—when one side receives over $3 billion in military funding from the United States every year—and when the other side is forced to evacuate with absolutely nowhere to go—that is not “conflict.” That is extermination.

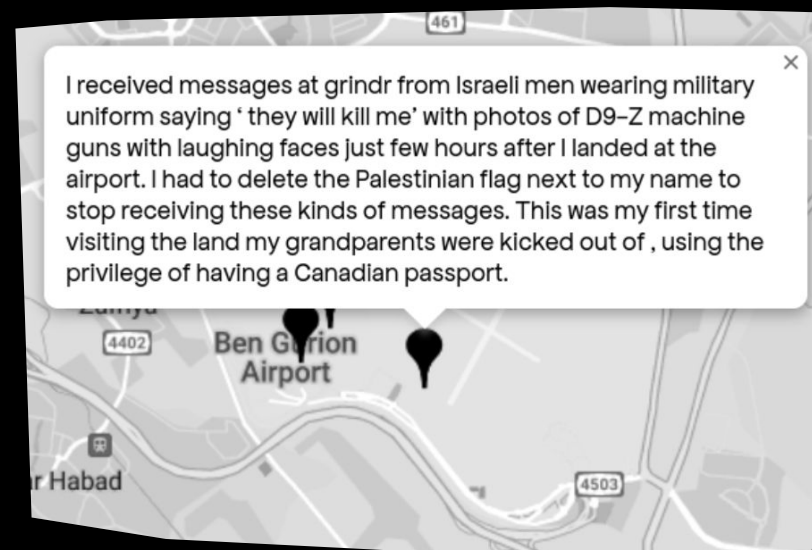
Matt Bernstein

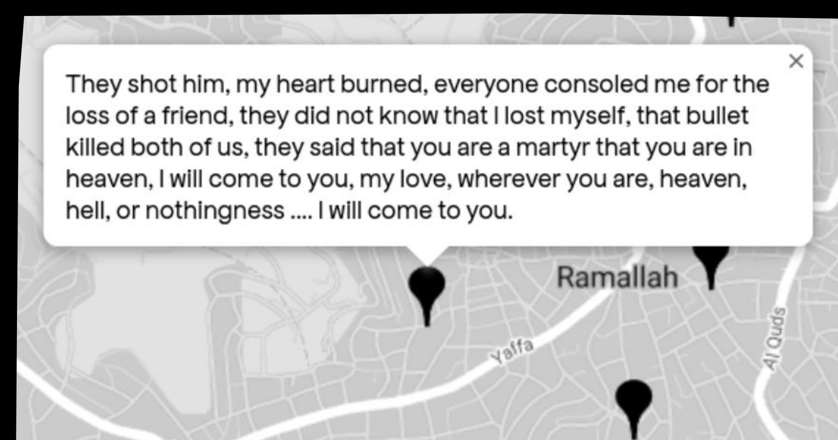


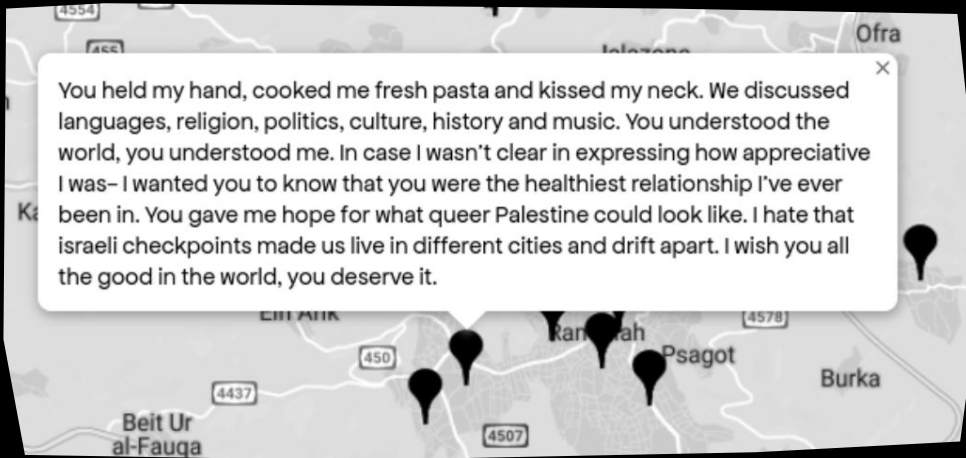


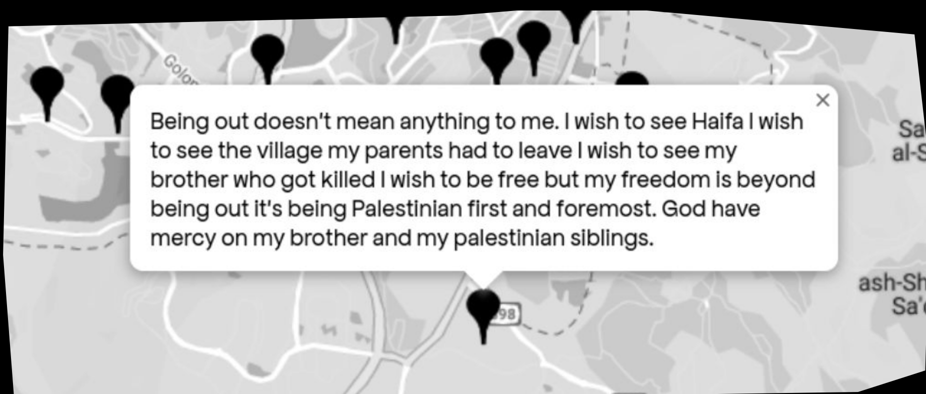


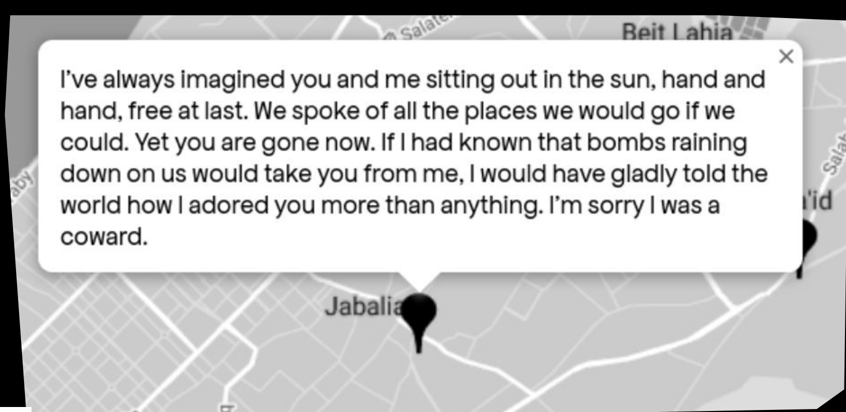
These location-tagged stories are anonymous submissions to Queering the Map (queeringthemap.com), a collaborative project of "digitally archiving LGBTQ2IA+ experience in relation to physical space."

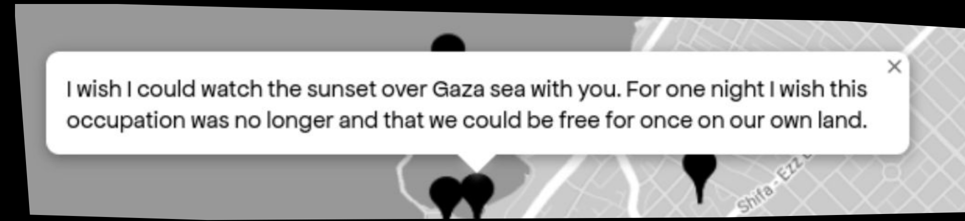




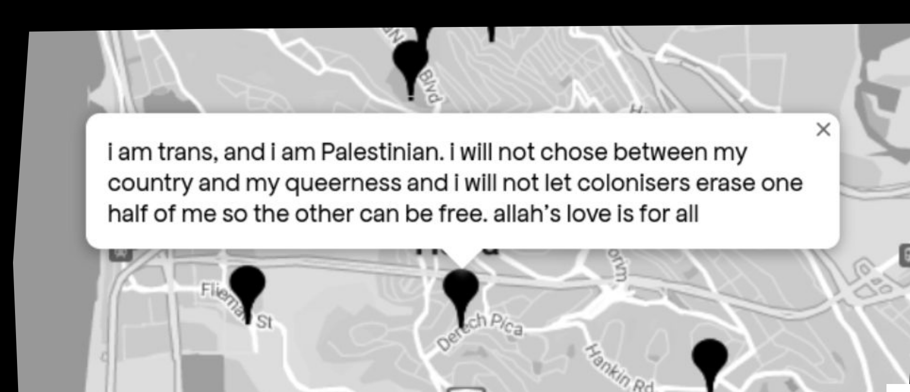

You held my hand, cooked me fresh pasta and kissed my neck. We discussed languages, religion, politics, culture, history and music. You understood the world, you understood me. In case I wasn't clear in expressing how appreciative I was– I wanted you to know that you were the healthiest relationship I've ever been in. You gave me hope for what queer Palestine could look like. I hate that israeli checkpoints made us live in different cities and drift apart. I wish you all the good in the world, you deserve it.
Ofra
Psagot
Burka
Beit Ur al-Fauqa


Being out doesn't mean anything to me. I wish to see Haifa I wish to see the village my parents had to leave I wish to see my brother who got killed I wish to be free but my freedom is beyond being out it's being Palestinian first and foremost. God have mercy on my brother and my palestinian siblings.


I've always imagined you and me sitting out in the sun, hand and hand, free at last. We spoke of all the places we would go if we could. Yet you are gone now. If I had known that bombs raining down on us would take you from me, I would have gladly told the world how I adored you more than anything. I'm sorry I was a coward.
Beit Lahia
Jabalia


I wish I could watch the sunset over Gaza sea with you. For one night I wish this occupation was no longer and that we could be free for once on our own land.


During the Palestinian nakba, my grandparents were forced out of their land to Lebanon. Later on, my family immigrated to France during the Lebanese civil war. The only thing grandpa got from the house before fleeing was the key and a picture of him and grandma infront their house. He would always talk about jaffa oranges , his house and the Mediterranean sea. I grew up wanting to know how I am, where I'm originally from so in 2017 I decided to search from my grandparents original house in old Jaffa. Long story short, with the help of Palestinians living there we found the stairs that used to lead to my grandfather's house , we found the house . We found the lighted window which was once a kitchen window. As a queer Palestinian, the only time I felt angry and broken about seeing a pride flag was when I saw it flying on grandparents house, on my stolen land.
Elifelet St


i am trans, and i am Palestinian. i will not chose between my country and my queerness and i will not let colonisers erase one half of me so the other can be free. allah's love is for all
Derech Pica
Hankin Rd